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Abstract of the Disclosure

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COMPOSITIONS AND METHODS FOR STIMULATING
MEGAKARYOCYTE GROWTH AND DIFFERENTIATION

Disclosed are novel proteins, referred to as
megakaryocyte growth and development factors (MGDFs;
also generally referred to as Mpl ligands), that have a
10 biological activity of stimulating the growth of
megakaryocytes and augmenting the differentiation or
maturation of megakaryocytes, ultimately to result in
the production of platelets. MGDF derivatives
comprising MGDF molecules attached to water soluble
15 polymers, such as polyethylene glycol, are also
disclosed, along with methods for their preparation.
Also disclosed are processes for obtaining the MGDFs in
homogeneous form from natural sources and producing them
by recombinant genetic engineering techniques from
20 mammals, including humans.